



MAP 1



CHAPTER ONE:

PURPOSE AND NEED

PURPOSE

On August 2, 2005, as part of the Fiscal Year 2006 Interior Appropriations Act, President George W. Bush signed Public Law 109-54 and authorized the National Park Service (NPS) to study the feasibility of establishing the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Water Trail. The Act also directed the Secretary to consult with federal, state, regional, and local agencies and representatives of the private sector, including the entities responsible for administering the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network (CBGN) and the Chesapeake Bay Program authorized by the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1267).

The purpose of the study is to determine whether the designation of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail is feasible and desirable.

Map 1 illustrates the overall study area as described in the study's enabling legislation. (PL 109-54). The study area includes parts of four states—Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and Pennsylvania—and the District of Columbia. Providing protection, public access and interpretation of these historic routes and related resources has been a growing focus of both public and private initiatives in recent years, with the approach to the 400th anniversary of the settlement of Jamestown and John Smith's voyages of 1607-1608.

In order to assess the feasibility and the desirability of this proposed trail, this study outlines two designation alternatives and the no action alternative. It also assesses the benefits and impacts of each of the three alternatives, and recommends one alternative. The study will apply the criteria of the National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1244(b)) to determine the feasibility of designation:

- the trail must be an established and documented route;
- it must be of national significance;

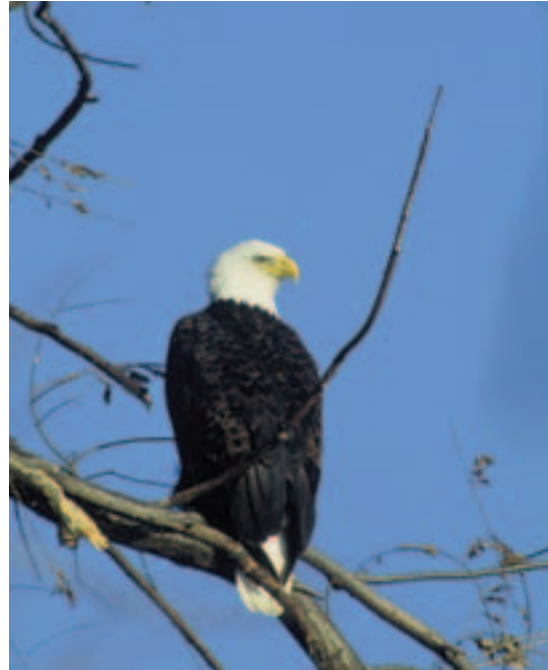


Photo courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

- it must have significant potential for public recreational use or historical interest.

This study is not a definitive trail guide or management plan, nor does this study provide a detailed description of the trail itself or the associated resources. Rather, this study provides a conceptual diagram of the historic trail routes as well as an inventory of currently known associated resources and public access sites. While this study evaluates the different alternatives for feasibility and desirability, this study is not a management plan and does not provide detailed management programs. If the trail is designated as a national historic trail (Alternative B), the NPS would develop management guidelines and conduct further environmental assessments of the preferred action through subsequent planning as required by the National Trails System Act. Or if the trail is established by multi-state (non-federal) designation as a commemorative trail (Alternative C), management planning would be undertaken by the states or a commission or a private management entity.

BACKGROUND

National historic trails have as their purpose the identification and protection of a historic route and its historic remnants and artifacts for public use and enjoyment. National historic trails must be nationally and historically significant, and they must offer interpretive opportunities to the public. They generally consist of remnant sites and trail segments and are not necessarily continuous.

This National historic trail, if established, would commemorate the voyages of Captain John Smith on the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries during 1607-1609. The study primarily evaluated the two bay-wide voyages of summer 1608. However, it includes Captain John Smith's voyages on the James and York Rivers in 1607 and 1609. While Smith wrote in detail about the dates and various exploratory stops on his bay-wide voyages, such detail was not readily available for his expeditions up the James and York Rivers. Thus this report and accompanying maps provide much less information regarding the 1607 and 1609 trips up the James and York Rivers, and it is recommended that additional research be conducted on these trips during the comprehensive management planning process. The proposed national historic trail would also recognize the Native American towns and culture of the seventeenth century; call attention to the natural history of the Bay; complement the CBGN; and provide new opportunities for education, recreation, and heritage tourism in the Chesapeake Bay region.

In a separate initiative, Sultana Projects, Inc., a non-governmental organization that provides educational programs that emphasize historical, cultural and environmental topics pertinent to the Chesapeake Bay region, has been building a twenty-eight-foot reproduction of John Smith's shallop. In the summer of 2007 a crew of modern-day explorers, historians, naturalists and educators will endeavor to retrace Captain John Smith's 1608 expeditions. While the results of the proposed Captain John

Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail study are pending, supporting elements of what might make such a water trail feasible are already under way under the existing authorities of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Water Trail initiative. Authorized by the United States Congress in 1998 and created in 2000, the CBGN was established to inspire public appreciation and conservation of the Chesapeake watershed.

Since 2000, over fifteen hundred miles of water trails have been developed on the Bay's tributary rivers, and these rivers—the routes of John Smith's explorations—pass nearby over sixty Chesapeake Bay Gateways. The Gateways web site offers a water trail toolbox that can assist trail managers in planning, developing and managing water trails, and Gateways grants are assisting with projects to enhance water trail access, orientation and interpretation.

Furthermore, the CBGN has already initiated work on a number of projects that will advance learning about Bay history and Captain John Smith. Some of those projects include:

John Smith's Chesapeake Voyages 1607-1609

The CBGN assembled a team of historians, archeologists and environmental scientists to write a book pulling together the best current knowledge on:

- Smith's voyages around the Chesapeake Bay
- The seventeenth century natural environment of the Chesapeake
- Native American settlements and culture of the seventeenth century Chesapeake

This fourteen-chapter book was employed as the definitive reference on Smith's voyages in the compilation of this study and is available to assist CBGN in developing interpretive projects and programming for the upcoming anniversary. A forthcoming printed edition of the book, with 150 maps and illustrations, is expected to be published by early 2007.

Exploring the Landscape of the Early Seventeenth Century Chesapeake through John Smith's Voyages

Employing the latest photorealistic landscape visualization technology, Pennsylvania State University, the Smithsonian Institution and two major Chesapeake cultural institutions—the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum and Historic St. Mary's City—are teaming up to develop a powerful new web-based attraction focused on the 400th anniversary of John Smith's "Voyages of Exploration" through the Chesapeake region. The project will give computer users in schools, homes, and libraries around the country—and the world—a chance to see vibrant and realistic images of the Chesapeake environment that so impressed Smith on his 1607-09 journeys and then compare them with images of the Bay environment today. This exciting interactive experience will allow visitors to track the progress of Smith's journeys, learn about the Native American inhabitants he encountered along the way and explore the dramatic changes in the Bay.

The Colonial Chesapeake

The fourth in a series of CBGN guides for exploring Chesapeake themes is now in development. While not exclusively focused on John Smith, this guide will introduce visitors to the colonial period on the Chesapeake from 1607 to the 1770s—and the Gateways where those stories may be experienced. Thus it will provide the context for the many developments that followed Smith's initial forays into the Bay landscape. Expected to be published by fall 2006, the guide will be accompanied by an interactive web module on the Gateways web site, and will complement a poster being developed by Schooner Sultana exploring aspects of colonial shipping commerce in more detail.

In addition to these Network-wide initiatives a sampling of projects being pursued at individual Gateways includes:

Virginia Living Museum— Survivor: Jamestown

Timed to coincide with the upcoming anniversary of John Smith's "Voyages of Exploration" through the Chesapeake, this highly interactive exhibit will explore why life was so difficult for early European settlers in Virginia and how different the Chesapeake environment was four hundred years ago from the Bay we know today. Traveling along a maze of interpretive stations, museum visitors will be challenged to make the choices that might have enabled them to qualify as "survivors" on the Bay of the early 1600s.

First Landing State Park— The Old New World: Creating a Chesapeake Indian Village

In a joint effort with the Nansemond Indian Tribe, this park in Virginia Beach will develop an authentic Virginia Algonquian Indian Village along the existing Cape Henry Trail. The village will include a chief's house, a sweathouse, and areas devoted to food preparation and crafts, with interpretive materials focusing on the culture of Chesapeake Indians and their complex relationship to the Chesapeake Bay and its resources. The project will be completed in time to serve as a backdrop for living-history programs during the upcoming 400th anniversary of John Smith's "Voyages of Exploration" in the Chesapeake Bay.

Lawrence Lewis Jr. Park— 2007 Enhancement Project

This twenty-four-acre park in Charles City, Virginia, was once home to the Weyanoke Indians, the tribe that claimed the site that European settlers turned into Jamestown. With the 400th anniversary of John Smith's "Voyages of Exploration" beginning in 2007, Lewis Park will install a series of interpretive wayside panels that describe the natural and cultural world of the Chesapeake in the early 1600s. The panels will be installed along an existing trail leading from a popular picnic pavilion to an elevated viewing platform.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

This historic context has been derived from the Statement of Significance written by John Salmon, Historian, under contract with the National Historic Landmarks Program, Washington Office, NPS. The Statement of Significance was drafted in accordance with the guidelines for evaluating national significance for national historic landmarks, in consultation with the staff of the National Historic Landmarks Program and the study team for this report. The statement of significance was then examined by a group of peer reviewers with specific knowledge of this field, and their comments were incorporated into the final document. As the national Trails System Act requires for National historic trail studies, this Statement of Significance was presented to and approved by the National Park System Advisory Board in March 2006. For the complete Statement of Significance and the list of peer reviewers, please see Appendix D.

Captain John Smith's voyages throughout the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries led to an unprecedented understanding of the geography of the region, an understanding that would eventually translate into writings and maps that would guide future travelers and settlers in the region for centuries. An understanding of these voyages and their impact is incomplete without a discussion of what preceded them as well as the events that followed.

The truth about the first years of the Jamestown colony is difficult to establish. Almost every aspect of this era is subject to debate as well as a frequent source of confusion among scholars and members of the public. Much of the problem lies in the fact that all of the contemporary letters and books were written by one party to the story—the English—who came to America bearing a culture almost as unfathomable to the native peoples as those cultures were to the newcomers. The challenge is to understand the worldviews and cultures of two

societies that are vastly different from most people's experiences today. In establishing that understanding, the power of myth is difficult to overcome.

A variety of native peoples lived around the Chesapeake Bay when the English arrived. During much of the period under discussion, the Powhatan people dominated the English, not the other way around. (Powhatan was both the name of the leader and the name of the tribe of people.) At first the English survived at the sufferance and with the continual assistance of the native peoples. This study also focuses on the Virginia Indians because it was with them that the English had the most frequent interactions and about whom more is known through contemporary writings combined with recent archeological investigations. There are groups in Virginia today who claim descendance from the seventeenth century Indian tribes and who are recognized as tribes by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The three principal figures in the story of this trail are Powhatan, Opechancanough, and Captain John Smith. Powhatan was the charismatic leader of the people in whose land the English settled in 1607. Opechancanough, a skillful planner and war leader, engineered a devastating attack on the colonists in 1622. Both men dealt during the first years of the colony with John Smith, the soldier of fortune whose forceful personality attracted either devotion or hatred from his contemporaries. It was with the Powhatan domain or polity that the English had their first and longest-lasting contacts, and much has been written about those contacts during John Smith's sojourn in America. (The Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary defines polity as a specific form of political organization or a politically organized unit.) The interactions between the English and the Powhatan became the pattern—for good and ill—for future interactions between the newcomers and the native peoples throughout eastern North America.

John Smith remains a fascinating character today because of the volumes of writings he left behind and the strong feelings for and against him evident in the writings of others. From his explorations of the Chesapeake Bay came a map so accurate that it remained useful for most of the seventeenth century, and his books influenced the history of the settlement and commerce of North America. Both Smith and his journeys over the Bay are of national significance to the story of our country.

The Chesapeake Bay Region and Its People in 1607

The large body of relatively shallow water today called Chesapeake Bay was—about four centuries ago—the center of the world for the people who lived along its shores and tributaries. Large rivers and small streams flowed into the Bay from the east and the west, serving the inhabitants as liquid highways. The Bay itself teemed with aquatic life that also enriched the rivers and streams: sturgeon, striped bass, menhaden, white perch, eels, crabs, oysters, mussels, and clams were all found in great abundance. For thousands of years, the native peoples used the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries for transportation, migration, communication, and trade. Fish and shellfish not only provided food for the people, but shells served as valuable trade goods.

The people of Tsenacomoco, the southern half of the Bay in present-day Virginia, lived in towns located along the principal waterways. A typical large town was sprawling by European standards and usually contained garden plots, dwellings, storehouses, and ceremonial and religious structures. Towns might be occupied or virtually deserted at various times of the year, depending on the demands of gardening, hunting, and fishing. The towns also migrated slowly along the rivers as the people reconstructed dwellings closer to fresh arable land.

These people—whom the English called “the Powhatan” after the name of their paramount chief—were Eastern Algonquian speakers

residing in the southernmost range of linguistically related people who occupied the East Coast from coastal North Carolina up to the Gulf of St. Lawrence. A small town named Powhatan, encircled by a palisade, stood at the lower end of the falls of the James River. It was the native town of the principal leader also named Powhatan (another of his names was Wahunsenacawh). Born perhaps about 1547, Powhatan had inherited a polity encompassing a number of tribal districts and a large territory that he further enlarged by diplomacy as well as conquest. The tribal districts within the polity were led by werowances or chiefs answerable to Powhatan, the paramount chief.

The Power of Powhatan

Although Powhatan was an imposing and powerful leader, his power was not absolute. It was personal and religious or shamanic, as well as what the English regarded as political or executive. To a certain extent he ruled by consensus, advised by a council of sub-leaders and religious authorities (“priests”), but he also seemed to dominate the council and could act independently of it. Powhatan was the principal civil leader, especially when it came to dealing with other nations, but others such as his brother (or possibly a cousin) Opechancanough were principal war leaders at the time the English arrived.

Powhatan possessed extensive powers of punishment over his people, but he also bore responsibility for their welfare. In 1607, Tsenacomoco was deep in a drought that would last until 1612. The challenges of the drought were compounded by the arrival of the Englishmen. In return for his protection and mutual aid and also as an acknowledgment of his leadership, Powhatan received from subordinate tribes what the English called “tribute,” mostly foodstuffs.

The English Newcomers

On April 26, 1607, a group of strangers from England entered the Chesapeake Bay. They came from a country ruled by a king whose power was tempered by Parliament. These

newcomers represented the Virginia Company of London, a private stock company whose objective was to establish a colony in the Chesapeake Bay region and exploit the resources there for the benefit of the investors.

Their three ships, named *Susan Constant*, *Godspeed*, and *Discovery*, carried 144 English men and boys. A landing party came ashore at Point Comfort, rejoiced at touching land after four unpleasant months aboard ship, and reconnoitered the nearby terrain. As the party returned near nightfall, native inhabitants attacked and wounded two Englishmen. The others opened fire with muskets and the attackers vanished. This was the first contact between the newcomers and the people of Tsenacomoco.

It was not, however, the first experience that the Powhatan had had with Europeans. Perhaps as early as 1524, Spaniards may have visited the Chesapeake Bay. In 1584–1585, Englishmen established a settlement at Roanoke Island, in present-day North Carolina, and the next winter explored the Chesapeake Bay. They abandoned Roanoke Island in 1586–1587, then returned later in 1587 to create another settlement there—the so-called “Lost Colony”—and conflicts with the local people followed. The Spanish came back to explore the Bay in 1588, English mariners followed suit about 1603, and there were doubtless other, unrecorded explorations. England concentrated on using private investment to create colonies, but the first attempts in Newfoundland and Maine as well as on Roanoke Island ended badly. The English consistently underestimated the ability of the native peoples to control their own country.

What drove the Europeans to explore and settle the land west of Europe? In part it was a quest for a quicker and easier route to the riches of the Orient, in part it was a desire to dominate the seas and protect their own trade routes and raid those of other nations, and in part it was a wish to increase national power on the world stage. Personal ambition and

the hope of glory and wealth inspired many individual adventurers.

Powhatan and English Worldviews

The worldviews of the Powhatan and the English could scarcely have been more dissimilar. The Powhatan people saw the land and its flora and fauna as an organic whole inhabited by human and non-human beings. Human beings played an important role in sustaining the universe, but they did not assume a position over nature. The English worldview held that human beings were a special creation separate from nature, which existed to be conquered and put into man’s service. The spiritual realm was someplace else entirely. The English polity was organized into a rigid hierarchy. The superiority and essential rightness of English religious, social, and political life to all others was simply assumed. The Indians of America were considered human, but perhaps not as fully human as the English.

Collisions and misunderstandings between the newcomers and the Powhatan peoples were inevitable. This was particularly true because the English generally regarded the native people as ignorant and savage devil-worshippers living in a “state of nature.” In English eyes they lacked sacred traditions worthy of respect, a social or political culture worth understanding, and an approach to living on the land worth adopting. That the country belonged to the Powhatan peoples and the English were uninvited “invaders” scarcely occurred to the newcomers. Some of the Englishmen who regularly interacted with the native peoples, however, developed a greater understanding of them than the stakeholders who remained in England.

Powhatan himself probably considered the Englishmen nuisances who might nonetheless prove helpful in countering hostile tribes and supplying useful trade goods. The native peoples had seen other Europeans come and go, and Powhatan must have been puzzled as well as angered when this group began settling without his permission on a swampy, unhealthy

piece of land on the north side of the James River. By the winter of 1607-1608, only thirty-eight of the 104 men were left alive. Disease had killed most of them, and the survivors lived primarily because Powhatan fed them.

During that winter, Powhatan learned more about the English when a captured newcomer, Captain John Smith, was brought before him at Werowocomoco. This prisoner, unlike most other Englishmen, seemed to make an effort to comprehend the Powhatan view of the world.

Captain John Smith and the Virginia Company

John Smith was born at Willoughby, Lincolnshire, in eastern England, and was baptized on January 9, 1580. He received a basic education, and then his father apprenticed him to a merchant in King's Lynn, a port town about thirty miles southeast of Willoughby. After Smith's father died in 1596, the sixteen-year-old youth abandoned his apprenticeship and began soldiering in the Netherlands. Thus began a military career that took him to France, Scotland, Italy, Greece, the Balkans, Austria, Poland, and Germany, among other places. He learned horsemanship during a brief interlude at home, then participated in a war between the Hungarians and the Turks. Smith was captured by the latter and sent to Constantinople and the Caucasus. He escaped, traveled through North Africa, and returned home in 1605. His military prowess earned him the rank of captain and the title of gentleman; his experiences sharpened his ambition and thirst for further adventure.

Smith soon joined a new enterprise. Bartholomew Gosnold and others secured a charter on April 10, 1606, that established two companies to explore and colonize the coast of North America. One, based in Plymouth, had present-day New England as its objective; the other, in London, looked to the Chesapeake Bay area. The "Counsell of Virginia," composed of investors in both companies, oversaw



the activities of the two groups. Some of the investors and their supporters had earlier been involved in the Carolina colonization effort. Smith joined the investors in the company bound for the Chesapeake, and on December 20, 1606, the three ships of the expedition set sail. Christopher Newport, an experienced seafarer who was about forty-one, commanded the fleet for the duration of the voyage. With them went a box, not to be opened until the vessels arrived in Virginia, containing a list of the men who would govern the group there.

The voyage to America began badly and got worse, especially for Smith. Following delays due to stormy weather, illness and boredom, Smith was arrested for "mutiny" on February 13, 1607 and confined. After the first landing and fight with the local inhabitants on April 26, Newport opened the box and read the list of councilmen, and surprisingly among them was Smith. On April 29, the company held a ceremony including a cross raising at the landing site, which Newport named Cape Henry, and took formal possession of the country for

King James and the Protestant faith. The newcomers then set off to explore the James River and find a location for their settlement. They considered a point of land called Archer's Hope for their settlement, but when they could not anchor near the shore they selected instead the peninsula they called Jamestown Island. On May 13, the Englishmen arrived, and the next day they began to establish their settlement.

Members of the Company began explorations in search of a western passage. Disappointed that the falls impeded further navigation, Newport led the explorers back to Jamestown, where he learned that some Powhatan warriors had attacked the settlement and killed two Englishmen. He ordered a proper fort constructed, and soon a triangular, stockaded structure was erected with two bastions facing up- and downstream to guard against attacks by the Spanish and a third facing inland to confront the Powhatan.

Late in 1607, while exploring the Chickahominy River, Smith was captured and brought to Powhatan at Werowocomoco. There, according to Smith's famous account published in 1624, he was about to be executed when the ten-year-old Pocahontas—Powhatan's favorite daughter—intervened to save him and he was thereafter "adopted" as one of the people. This episode has generated a vast amount of debate among historians, both in regard to the story of Smith's captivity as well as to the meaning of what happened to him. There are numerous discrepancies between Smith's first account, written in 1608, and his retelling in 1624, as well as additional material and details in the later version. Assuming that Smith described what occurred as accurately as he could (Pocahontas aside), he clearly did not understand the implications of the encounter due to language and substantial cultural differences. Regardless of the truth or accuracy of Smith's accounts of his captivity, once it ended and he had been escorted back to Jamestown on January 2, 1608, Powhatan people soon began to appear there regularly

bearing food. Smith found the colony in a state of near-chaos. The company had been reduced to fewer than forty because of disease and starvation.

This same day, Captain Newport's "first supply" arrived from England bringing with it over one hundred men including craftsmen, and ample supplies. They unloaded most of the supplies; then, disaster struck when the whole place burned, including the supplies. Mere survival replaced mining as Newport's first objective, and Smith, because of his new association with Powhatan, became the key to survival. Smith soon arranged a meeting between Newport and Powhatan at Werowocomoco, and both sides agreed to a trade relationship, securing food supplies for the English.

For Powhatan, however, the meeting was less than successful because the English deceived him. Smith, during his captivity, had lied to Powhatan about why the English were in Virginia in the first place, claiming that they had merely come to escape the Spanish. In fact, of course, the English intended to colonize the country and take up residence wherever they pleased as soon as they could identify good sites for mines and trading posts.

Smith's First Chesapeake Bay Voyage (June 2 – July 15, 1608)

On June 2, 1608, Smith and his crew sailed into the Chesapeake Bay in a twenty-eight-foot shallop on his first bay-wide voyage of exploration. Before they parted, Smith gave Nelson, who was en route to England, a sketch map of part of the Bay and its river system, as well as a letter to a friend, published later that year as *A True Relation of such occurrences and accidents of noate as hath hapned in Virginia since the first planting of that Collony*. A copy of part of Smith's map soon arrived in Spain, sent from London in a diplomatic dispatch in September 1608 by the Spanish ambassador, Don Pedro de Zuñiga. The dispatch and map constituted one of Zuñiga's several attempts to interest King Philip III in

eliminating the Virginia colony. The map would have made it relatively easy to do so, for the triangular James fort was clearly noted on the north side of the carefully drawn James River. Only a few months after Smith drew his first map, then, it had become an element in an international intrigue that threatened the English settlement's existence.

In exploring the Chesapeake Bay, Smith was following Company instructions to seek valuable minerals, identify fish and wildlife, study the forests for useful timber, locate good ports, and learn about the native people's towns and numbers of warriors. Smith later wrote and mapped extensively, documenting both of his Chesapeake Bay voyages, based both on information from the native people and his own observation. Many of the place-names he assigned are still in use.

Smith had selected fourteen companions for his first voyage, probably for their skills. Smith also engaged the services of native people as guides and translators when necessary throughout the voyage. Smith and his crew explored throughout the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, including up the Patapsco River past the site of present-day Baltimore, and the Potomac River past present-day Washington, DC. During their explorations, they encountered many different peoples and traded and interacted with them to varying degrees. While exploring the Potomac, Smith met a Wicocomoco man named Mosco, who had an unusually heavy beard that suggested some European ancestry via earlier explorers. Mosco assumed the position of guide and coordinator for Smith and his men, both on this and on Smith's second voyage of exploration.

Eager to explore the Rappahannock River, Smith headed south along the shore of the Northern Neck on July 15, examining the creeks along the way and visiting Wicocomoco on the Great Wicomico River. Their journey was cut short when Smith was stung by a cow-nose ray while fishing. He called the place Stingray Point, a name it bears to this day.

That night, Smith—still feeling the effects of the ray's sting—decided to postpone his exploration of the Rappahannock River and return to Jamestown. The incoming tide had floated the shallop off the shoal, and during the night the crew made enough progress to round Old Point Comfort and put in at Kecoughtan by the next evening.

Upon their return to Jamestown, they played a little joke on the inhabitants. Knowing that the colonists lived in dread of a Spanish attack and to test their responsiveness, Smith and his men decorated the shallop with painted streamers that looked Spanish rather than English, so that the Jamestown residents would think the vessel was a scouting boat in advance of a Spanish frigate. It is doubtful that they were amused, because the situation at Jamestown had gone from bad to worse in Smith's absence.

Smith's Second Chesapeake Bay Voyage (July 24 – September 7, 1608)

For his second voyage, Smith reduced the number of men from fourteen to twelve and first concentrated his explorations on the upper reaches of the Rappahannock River. The first voyage had taught Smith that the Northwest Passage probably could not be found by sailing up the rivers that flowed into the Bay. He knew that the navigability of the James, the Potomac, and several other rivers terminated in rocky falls, and none of the native people he interviewed thought that a great sea was accessible by sailing farther west. On his second voyage, Smith would test the head of the Bay and the Rappahannock River, but he probably knew that any such passage lay elsewhere, if it existed. Smith and his crew left Jamestown on July 24.

They explored the Sassafra River to the east and the Susquehanna River, into present-day Pennsylvania. Throughout their journey, Smith and his men placed wood crosses marking their landing sites for England, as they had been doing since first landing in the Bay. Along the way they met and traded with the

Massawomeck, Tockwogh and Susquehannock. Smith's friendly relationships and trading were based on misconceptions among the various tribes, who viewed the product of trade, particularly the objects that had been forcibly taken from their enemies, as expressions of friendship and alliance. Misunderstandings between the English and Native Americans were common and continued. Smith was fortunate to usually find himself on the beneficial side of these misunderstandings.

Smith's party learned, from the local inhabitants as well as from his own observations, that the head of the Chesapeake Bay did not lead to the Northwest Passage. It was not what he had hoped to find, but it was useful information nonetheless. Smith's party continued their voyage, exploring the Pautuxent and Rappahannock Rivers. Smith reunited with Mosco, traveling the Rappahannock to the vicinity of present-day Fredericksburg, where they were attacked. One of the attackers remained behind, wounded. The man's name was Amoroleck, and he was from a Mannahoac town, and lived outside the Powhatan polity. Amoroleck knew that there were mountains west of his town, but nothing about what lay beyond them. Smith's encounter with Amoroleck led to the establishment of a peaceful trading relationship with the Mannahoac, Powhatan's enemies of interior Virginia. Beside trading peacefully with the Mannahoac, Smith had also brokered a peace between adversaries within Powhatan's polity, breaking yet another rule.

Smith had to return to Jamestown by September 10, when he was due to assume the presidency of the colony legitimately. On September 7, laden with notes, maps, war booty, gifts, and trade goods, the shallop docked at Jamestown.

John Smith's explorations of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries had ended. He had failed to find gold, silver, or the Northwest Passage. But he had accomplished a great deal, for good and ill. He saw more with his

own eyes (and wrote more about it) than any other Englishman then in Virginia. He gathered data for a map that would guide English explorers and settlers for decades to come. He journeyed a great distance for the time, in an open boat with crews that were often ill, and lost only one man. He faced storms and combat and brought his men and his vessel safely home. He formed alliances with a vast number of American Indian tribes, using courage and bluster and deception in the process, but he also violated the agreement with Powhatan and unwittingly endangered both Jamestown and the great chief. Smith's voyages brought out his best qualities—personal bravery, coolness in times of stress, canny negotiating skills, and a knack for leadership. They also illustrated his worst—deceit, manipulation, and the ability to claim land and resources through arrogance and force. Regardless of the outcomes, however, Smith and his companions had survived a grand adventure, and the voyages were a great accomplishment.

The End of Smith's Sojourn in Virginia

One benefit of the voyage for Smith's men was that they had avoided the worst of the sickly season at Jamestown, where disease and poor sanitation had taken its usual toll. When Smith was elected president on September 10, 1608, he instituted a campaign of cleanup and repair, rebuilding the fort and constructing a second on the south side of the James River. Earthen remnants of that stronghold, the oldest-surviving English structure in Virginia, are located in present-day Surry County, on a site open to the public called Smith's Fort Plantation.

The settlers anticipated the imminent arrival of the "second supply." The fleet, led by Christopher Newport, appeared in mid-October with seventy more colonists and provisions that Smith considered inadequate.

Newport also informed the council that the London Company had decided to stage a "coronation" ceremony for Powhatan at

Jamestown, the purpose of which was to recognize Powhatan's leadership of his own people as well as to symbolize his submission to King James I. Smith led a band of men to Werowocomoco to issue the invitation. Powhatan scoffed at the invitation. According to Smith, Powhatan said, "If your king have sent me presents, I also am a king, and this my land, 8 daies I will stay [at Werowocomoco] to receive them. Your father [Newport] is to come to me, not I to him, nor yet to your fort."

Newport agreed to Powhatan's demands, and the gifts were carried to Werowocomoco. The ceremony proved a fiasco for the English. After presenting Powhatan with the gifts (copper, a basin and pitcher, and a bed and bedclothes), Newport attempted to get the chief to kneel to receive his crown. Powhatan refused, despite pleadings and demonstrations, but finally, with men "leaning hard" on his shoulders to bend him slightly, Newport got the crown on his head. In return, Powhatan gave Newport a pair of his old shoes and a cloak. He refused, however, to assist Newport in his expedition into Monacan country beyond sending a guide with him.

In this episode, Powhatan clearly showed his awareness of English strategy. He had made the English come to him, he had accepted the crown largely on his own terms, and he had accepted gifts as the tribute of the English. He had demonstrated that he was indeed the "king" in his own land. Meanwhile, Smith busied himself organizing the remaining men to produce export goods. Smith also worked to trade, sometimes forcibly, to obtain food-stuffs necessary to supply the fort.

Factional divisions had intensified since the arrival of the "second supply." Smith explained his side in a letter to the London Company and enclosed a map which distilled the information gathered during his voyages. The map showed, the "way of the mountaines and current of the rivers, with their severall turnings, bayes, shoules, Isles, Inlets, and creekes, the

breadth of the waters, the distances of places and such like." Smith's map would be published in 1612 and form the basis for his 1624 map as well. It established beyond challenge that the English had explored and "claimed" the Bay. It served future immigrants, helping them establish colonies such as William Claiborne's 1632 settlement on Kent Island and Lord Baltimore's Maryland colony in 1634.

In December 1608 Smith faced the problem of provisioning the colony for the winter. Smith had great trouble locating people with whom to trade and it became obvious that Powhatan was trying to starve the colony and would have to be confronted. Powhatan sent word that he would provision the English if Smith would agree to build him an "English house" at Werowocomoco. Work began on the house and by December 30 as Smith later recounted in *The Generall Historie*, the English celebrated Christmas amid the hospitality of the native people.

This peace was short lived and fighting broke out between the English and the Powhatan. Their alliance was dissolved. The English were at war with the Powhatan in the first of what would become a series of bloody conflicts.

Early in June, a large resupply fleet under Christopher Newport had departed Plymouth harbor for Virginia. Besides Newport, it also carried other gentlemen who would play important roles in the colony, including John Rolfe, who would become the husband to Pocahontas. On July 24, about a week out from Cape Henry, the fleet encountered a ferocious hurricane that dispersed the ships hither and yon. The Sea Venture, carrying Newport, Gates, and Somers, almost sank but miraculously stayed afloat. It then struck rocks but remained upright just off one of the Bermuda islands—an adventure later transformed and immortalized in Shakespeare's play, *The Tempest*. The rest of the fleet straggled into Jamestown beginning August 11.

Although Smith welcomed the supplies and the new colonists, the problems of infighting,

jealousies, and wild charges of disloyalty threatened to rend the colony asunder again. Smith dispersed large numbers of colonists, both to break up the cabals and to save the rapidly dwindling food supply. Smith continued to trade with the Powhatan and eventually found himself under charges that he had at once both treated the Native peoples too favorably, perhaps attempting to gain status for himself, as well as treating them too harshly. Following a gunpowder accident that severely injured Smith's leg and amid charges by others at Jamestown, Smith returned to England. Smith arrived in London, slowly recovering from his injuries, late in November. Although the Company declined to pursue the charges against him, it never again sent him to the colony. John Smith's Virginia adventure had ended.

Smith the Writer

Smith set about turning his earlier work, *A True Relation*, and his notes and sketch maps from his Chesapeake Bay voyages, into a book. The result, *A Map of Virginia*, appeared in 1612. It consists of a book in two parts, and the map, which was reissued in many versions between then and 1632. The first part of the book is Smith's "Description of the Country," which details the fauna and flora of the Chesapeake region, as well as the American Indians who lived there. The second part describes the history of the colony and has a separate title page: *The Proceedings of the English Colonie In Virginia since their first beginning from England in the yeare of our Lord 1606, till this present 1612*.

Smith returned to America in 1614, when he explored present-day Maine and the Massachusetts coast, chronicling that adventure in *A Description of New England*, published in 1616. Although he advanced several schemes for colonization and other endeavors in America, he remained in England the rest of his life. In 1624, he published his magnum opus, *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles*.

He wrote several other books as well as poems, but it is for the *True Relation*, the *Map of Virginia*, and the *Generall Historie* that he is best remembered. They are self-promoting, but also exciting firsthand accounts of the wonders that he saw, especially in the Chesapeake Bay region.

He died on June 21, 1631, at the age of fifty-one. His epitaph was his last act of self-evaluation, delightfully ironic given the skepticism with which his writings often have been read:

*Here lies one conquered that hath
conquered kings,
Subdu'd large territories, and done things
Which to the world impossible would seem
But that the truth is held in more esteem.*

Smith remains for Americans today a fascinating, contradictory character, perhaps because he seems to personify so many traits that have come to be regarded as quintessentially American. His relentless self-promotion was typical of his time and it was largely based on real accomplishments, most notably his voyages of exploration and "discovery" on the Chesapeake Bay. The maps and books he produced from these and other adventures bore consequences for the native peoples as well as for new settlers for many years to come. His voyages were magnificent achievements not surpassed, perhaps, until the Lewis and Clark expedition almost two centuries later.

The Survival of the Virginia Colony

Powhatan had abandoned Werowocomoco soon after his last meeting there with John Smith in January 1609. He moved his principal village about fifty miles from Jamestown, which was as far away from the English as Powhatan could get and still govern his polity. By the spring of 1610, Jamestown was almost in ruins, with almost three-fourths of the colonists there having either died or run off. The decision was made to abandon Virginia when, on June 7, Governor Lord De La Warr arrived with a large number of

well-equipped men, including soldiers, as well as women and children—about five hundred people altogether—and enough food to last them all for some time. The fortunes of the colony had just been reversed.

The Virginia Company had reorganized the colony along military lines and secured a new charter in 1609 that greatly increased the area of “Virginia” to include most of what later became the United States. Whereas until then all the land had been under the Company’s control, now the concept of the private ownership of land was introduced into the colony, although it did not become a viable policy until the charter of 1618 was issued. The Company based its new plans and its instructions to the directors in Jamestown in part on John Smith’s *True Relation*, his letter, and the map he had drawn. It also ordered a new, much more harsh, policy toward native people.

A generation later, the year 1646 marked both an end and a beginning. The English colony’s survival was assured as early as the 1620s, despite the great attack of 1622, because the Powhatan people could not stop the flood of new settlers. Sheer numbers, technological superiority, self-sufficiency, and the determination to expand regardless of native opposition tilted the balance to the English long before 1646. It took Opechancanough’s last attack and defeat, however, for the native peoples to acknowledge that reality. In addition, Opechancanough’s death in that year cut the last link to the first years of the colony and especially to John Smith. Opechancanough was the sole surviving major player in that drama who had known Smith, spoken with him, and fought with him. Truly, an era had ended with the old man’s death.

The other colonies established in the Chesapeake Bay watershed—Maryland, Delaware, and Pennsylvania—eventually followed the pattern of English-native relations in Virginia. Before long, many of the tribes that John Smith had encountered in his

voyages had either disappeared from English records or had been vastly reduced in numbers from disease, intertribal and intercultural conflicts, and exile to other places. The last significant war against the native people in seventeenth-century Virginia was Bacon’s Rebellion in 1676. A few tribes survived on reservations, some lived quietly in self-contained communities, while others emigrated or lost their cohesion and were assimilated into the surrounding population of non-natives. In Virginia, even the surviving tribes were officially stripped of their identities as Virginia Indians by the “racial purity” laws of the early twentieth century. Only recently, in historical terms, have they emerged from the shadows to claim recognition by state and federal authorities, a struggle that is far from over.

John Smith’s voyages on the Chesapeake Bay had far-reaching consequences. His “discoveries,” recorded in his maps and books, helped to change Company policy toward private land-holding and promoted the transformation of the Bay’s environment through farming and the settlers’ exploitation of natural resources. The large-scale emigration from England that followed in Smith’s wake increased the pressure on the native peoples and the Bay itself. Smith’s model for settlement in the Bay region largely became the model for English America from New England to the Carolinas. His maps served settlers and colonial governments until late in the seventeenth century. And the stories of his exploits continue to intrigue Americans today.

The threats to the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem, with which the native peoples had lived for so many centuries, are well documented and beyond the scope of this study. Perhaps, as modern tourists follow the trail of exploration laid down by John Smith, they will come to revere the Bay as did those first Americans.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE HISTORY OF THE CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION

Through 1607

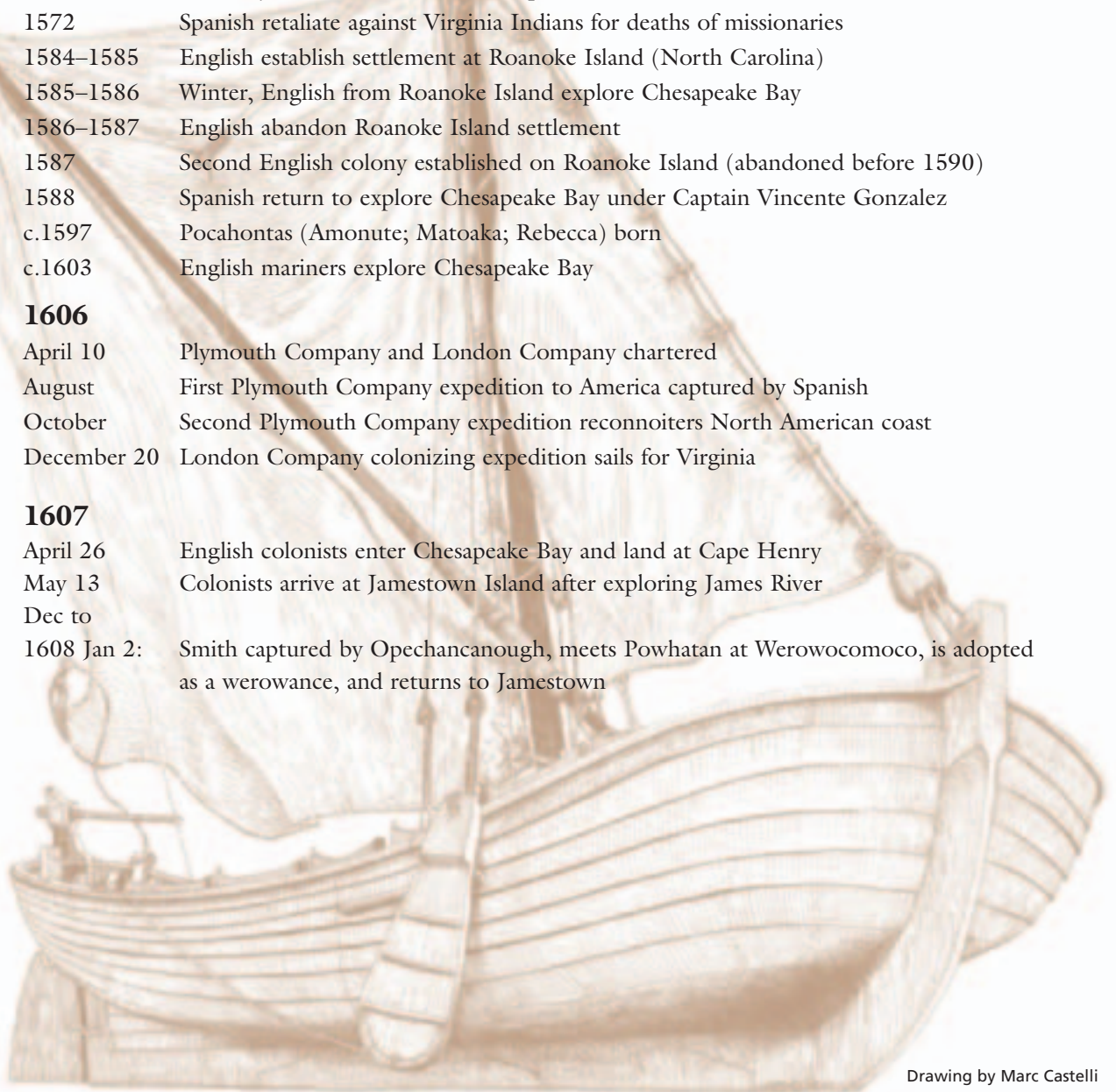
- 1524 Spanish explorer may have visited Chesapeake Bay
- 1546 French vessel enters the Chesapeake Bay
- c.1547 Powhatan (Wahunsenacawh) born
- c.1561 Paquinquino ("Don Luis") sails away with Spanish under Pedro Menendez de Aviles
- c.1570–1600 Powhatan inherits and expands polity
- 1570 September, Don Luis returns; Spanish establish Jesuit mission on York River
- 1571 February, Don Luis exterminates Spanish Jesuit mission
- 1572 Spanish retaliate against Virginia Indians for deaths of missionaries
- 1584–1585 English establish settlement at Roanoke Island (North Carolina)
- 1585–1586 Winter, English from Roanoke Island explore Chesapeake Bay
- 1586–1587 English abandon Roanoke Island settlement
- 1587 Second English colony established on Roanoke Island (abandoned before 1590)
- 1588 Spanish return to explore Chesapeake Bay under Captain Vincente Gonzalez
- c.1597 Pocahontas (Amonute; Matoaka; Rebecca) born
- c.1603 English mariners explore Chesapeake Bay

1606

- April 10 Plymouth Company and London Company chartered
- August First Plymouth Company expedition to America captured by Spanish
- October Second Plymouth Company expedition reconnoiters North American coast
- December 20 London Company colonizing expedition sails for Virginia

1607

- April 26 English colonists enter Chesapeake Bay and land at Cape Henry
- May 13 Colonists arrive at Jamestown Island after exploring James River
- Dec to
- 1608 Jan 2: Smith captured by Opechancanough, meets Powhatan at Werowocomoco, is adopted as a werowance, and returns to Jamestown



Drawing by Marc Castelli

CHRONOLOGY OF THE HISTORY OF THE CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION

Captain John Smith's Chesapeake Bay Voyages 1608

Jun 2–Jul 21	Smith leads fifteen men on first exploration of Chesapeake Bay
June 2–3	Smith's party sails from Jamestown to Cape Charles
June 3	Cape Charles to Accomack Town
June 4	Accomack Town to Chesconnessex Creek
June 5	Chesconnessex Creek to Wicocomoco Town (Md.)
June 6	Wicocomoco Town to Bloodsworth Island
June 7–8	Bloodsworth Island
June 8	Bloodsworth Island to mouth of Nanticoke River
June 9	Mouth of Nanticoke River
June 10	Up Nanticoke River and back
June 11	Nanticoke River to Randle Cliff
June 12	Randle Cliff to Sillery Bay on Patapsco River
June 13	Sillery Bay to Elkridge and back, on Patapsco River
June 14	Patapsco River
June 15	Patapsco River to mouth of Herring Bay
June 16	Herring Bay to Cornfield Harbor
June 17	Cornfield Harbor to Nomini Creek (Va.)
Jun 18–Jul 15	Nomini Bay to Great Falls, return to mouth of Potomac River (Va. and Md.)
July 15	Mouth of Potomac River to Ingram Bay (Va.)
July 16	Ingram Bay to Fleets Bay
July 17	Fleets Bay to Stingray Point, Rappahannock River
July 18–19	Stingray Point to Kecoughtan on James River
July 20	Kecoughtan to Warraskoyack
July 21	Warraskoyack to Jamestown

1608

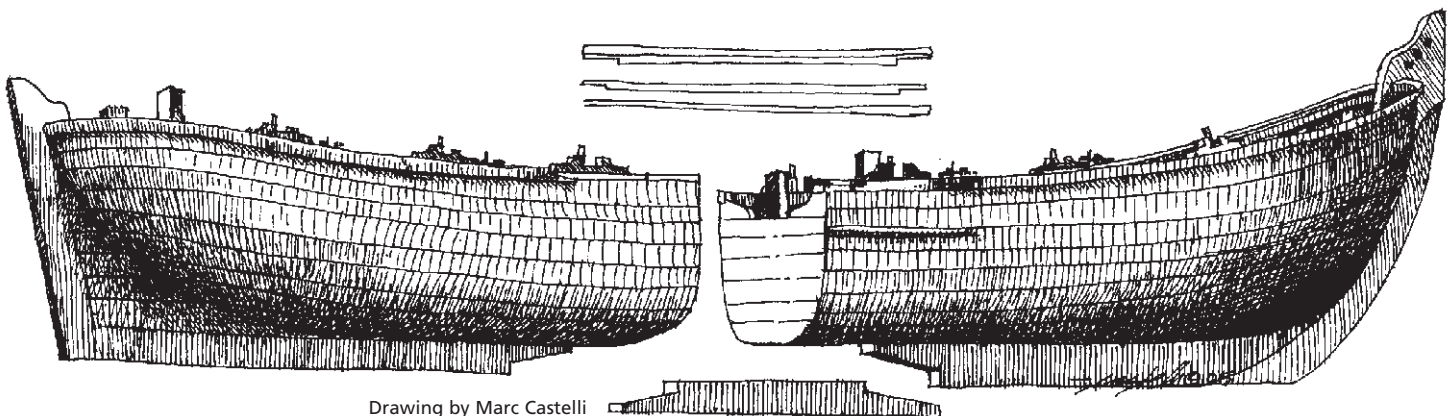
Jul 24–Sept 7	Smith leads twelve men on second Chesapeake Bay exploration
July 24	Jamestown to Kecoughtan
July 25–25	Kecoughtan
July 27	Kecoughtan to Stingray Point
July 28	Rappahannock River to Cove Point (Md.)
July 29	Cove Point to mouth of Patapsco River
July 30	Patapsco River to head of Northeast River
July 31	Northeast River to Tockwogh (Sassafras) River
August 1	Up the Tockwogh River
August 2	Tockwogh River to Smith Falls on the Susquehanna River (Pa.)
August 3	Susquehanna River to head of Elk River (Md.)
August 4	Head of Elk River to Big Elk Creek
August 5	Elk Creek to Smith's Falls on the Susquehanna River (Pa.)
August 6	Susquehanna River to Tockwogh town (Md.)

CHRONOLOGY OF THE HISTORY OF THE CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION

August 7	Tockwogh town
August 8	Tockwogh River to Rock Hall Harbor, mouth of Chester River
August 9	Chester River to Patuxent River
August 10	Up Patuxent River to Pawtuxunt town on Battle Creek
August 11	Pawtuxunt town to Mattpanient town
August 12	Mattpanient town to Acquintanacsuck town
August 13	Patuxent River to St. Jerome Creek below Point No Point
August 14	Potomac River to Rappahannock River (Va.)
August 15–16	Up Rappahannock River to Moraughtacund town
August 17	Moraughtacund town to Rappahannock ambush at Cat Point Creek
August 18	Cat Point Creek to Pissaseck
August 19	Pissaseck to Nantaughtacund towns
August 20	Nantaughtacund to Upper Cuttatawomen towns
August 21	Cuttatawomen town to Fetherstone Bay
August 22	Fetherstone Bay to the fall line to Hollywood Bar
August 23	Hollywood Bar to Cuttatawomen
August 24	Cuttatawomen to Pissaseck towns
August 25	Pissaseck to Rappahannock ambushing place near Moraughtacund
August 26–29	Negotiations near Moraughtacund
August 30–31	Moraughtacund to Piankatank River
Sept 1–3	Piankatank River exploration
Sept 3–4	Piankatank River to Old Point Comfort
Sept 5–7	Point Comfort to Jamestown with explorations of Elizabeth and Nansemond Rivers
December	Smith sends “Mappe of the Bay and Rivers” and narrative to London Company

1609

May	Sir Thomas Gates sails to Virginia with instructions from London Company for expanding colony based on Smith’s map and narrative
May 23	New charter issued to former London Company, now Virginia Company



Drawing by Marc Castelli

CHRONOLOGY OF THE HISTORY OF THE CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION

Later Significant Dates

- 1609** September • Smith suffers gunpowder burns, sails for England
November • Smith arrives in London
- 1610** June • Lord De La Warr begins to pursue war against Powhatan peoples
- 1612** March 22 • Third charter issued to Virginia Company
John Smith publishes *A Map of Virginia* and *The Proceedings of the English Colonie in Virginia*
John Rolfe successfully plants and cultivates tobacco crop
Dutch establish colony on Manhattan Island, New York
- 1613** Sir Samuel Argall attacks French settlements in Maine
Spring • Argall kidnaps Pocahontas at Patowomeck and takes her to Jamestown to be held for ransom
- 1614** April • Powhatan agrees to peace; Pocahontas converts to Christianity
April • John Rolfe marries Pocahontas
John Rolfe sends first tobacco cargo to England
- 1616** John Rolfe, Pocahontas, and others visit England
- 1617** March • Pocahontas dies and is buried in England
- 1618** April • Powhatan dies
November 18 • new Company charter establishes headright system, fueling settlement
- 1619** Jul 30–Aug 4 • Virginia General Assembly first meets
August • First Africans arrive in Virginia
- 1620–1621** Opechancanough plans attack on English settlements
- 1620** November 9 • *Mayflower* reaches Cape Cod, Mass., with Puritans
- 1622** March 22 • Opechancanough's attack on English settlements
- 1622–1632** Era of warfare between English and Powhatan Indians
- 1623** English settlements sprout in Mass., New Hampshire, and Maine
- 1624** John Smith publishes *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles*
- 1628–1629** Opechancanough becomes paramount chief
- 1632** Peace treaty between English and Pamunkey and Chickahominy Indians
- 1632–1644** English expand settlements; growing population crowds Powhatan people
- 1632** June 30 • Lord Baltimore receives charter for Maryland colony
- 1633** November 22 • Gov. Leonard Calvert sails with two hundred settlers for Maryland
- 1634** February 27 • Maryland colonists sail into Chesapeake Bay
- 1635** February 26 • First Maryland assembly meets
- 1635** April 23 • Naval skirmish occurs between vessels of Virginia fur trader William Claiborne and Maryland government
- 1642** Oliver Cromwell overthrows King Charles I and establishes Parliamentary rule
- 1644** March 24 • Roger Williams receives charter for Rhode Island colony
April 18 • Opechancanough launches second attack on English settlements
- 1644–1646** English retaliate against Powhatan people, who begin to abandon eastern Virginia
- 1645–1647** Conflicts in Maryland between Catholic government and Protestant rebels
- 1646** Between spring and fall, Opechancanough captured, taken to Jamestown, and shot and killed
October 5 • English colonists conclude peace treaty with Powhatan polity